



REC 10/7/88

# Vernal District Update



## Bureau of Land Management • Vernal, Utah

September 1988

### DISTRICT AND COMPANY TEAM UP FOR SAFETY

Several abandoned, open gilsonite mine shafts varying from two to three feet wide and as much as one-hundred feet deep, have been fenced-in in a cooperative safety venture between the District and the American Gilsonite Company (AGC). The gilsonite was mined in the 1940's under a state lease. The land was eventually transferred to BLM in a state land swap and the lease came into the hands of the American Gilsonite Company.

The District and AGC worked out an agreement in which the District would supply the fencing materials and AGC would supply the manpower to erect fences around the shafts. It took two AGC employees using a backhoe for leveling and a compressor to drill into a rock base 10-days to complete the project.

### DISTRICT'S LARGEST PUBLIC MEETING HELD

Over 190 persons attended a recent public meeting after the release of an Environmental Assessment pertaining to the Archer Phosphate Prospecting Permits in an area just a few miles north of Vernal. If allowed, the permits would authorize exploration which could lead to development. Only one response was favorable to the proposed activity, all the rest were opposed---especially to the mining phase.

### DISTRICT OIL AND GAS DEVELOPMENT CONTINUES TO DECLINE

Crude oil prices below \$15 per barrel have significantly deterred interest in oil exploration in the Uintah Basin. During Fiscal Year 1987, the District received 73 Applications for Permission to Drill. During Fiscal Year 1988, the number dropped to 58.

### PIPELINE ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT TO BE READY IN LATE OCTOBER

Greystone Developmental Consultants, Incorporated, of Englewood, Colorado, is scheduled to provide a Draft Environmental Assessment concerning Questar Company's request to construct a 20-inch natural gas transportation line from Clay Basin south to the Fiddler Station Pipeline. The proposed pipeline would be approximately 75 miles long with about 55 miles on federally administered land.

### VERNAL DISTRICT ADVISORY COUNCIL MEETING TO BE HELD NOVEMBER 14

6:30 pm

The Vernal District has scheduled an evening business meeting for their Advisory Council on November 14th. The following five

scott: should we attend? let's discuss obta  
your vernal trip of 10/10 ...  
Lance

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agenda items have been set with others to be determined and announced at a later date: 1) The Archer Phosphate Exploration Permits, 2) The Diamond Mountain Resource Management Planning Effort, 3) Brown's Park Prescribed Burns, 4) Follow Up Issues from the Book Cliffs Resource Area Summer Tour, and 5) Items at large from the Advisory Council. The public is welcome to attend the meeting and will be allotted a brief period in which to make comments to the Council. Those desiring to comment would need to contact David E. Little, District Manager by November 9th. Phone (801) 789-1362.

DISTRICT OFFICE TO BE RENOVATED

The Vernal District Office will be renovated as a part of a new lease renewal. Renovations will include modification of the reception area, some new wall installation, new partitions, light switch modification, painting, and new carpet throughout. Work is to be completed by late November of this year. In the mean time, please excuse our dust and disarray.

DISTRICT HEAVILY INVOLVED IN FIRE SUPPRESSION SEASON

At least thirty-seven of the District's sixty-seven permanent full-time employees have been involved in this year's fire season activities. Involvement has ranged from driving supply and other vehicles on local fires to serving as key members of critical fire overhead (management) teams.

District personnel have also been involved in fire suppression activities in no less than seven western states. Several staff worked between 30-40 days and some exceeded forty days. District Manager David E. Little's philosophy is, "We are going to support the National Fire need and where the Bureau has spent money to train folks for fire assignments, we are going to make them available."

Vernal's fire effort surpassed all other BLM efforts within the state.